

# Oxford Democrat.

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OXFORD DEMOCRAT,

PUBLISHED WEEKLY, TUESDAY, BY

G. W. CHASE,

EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

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A YEARLY DONATION WILL BE MADE FOR

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PROMPTLY AND NEATLY EXECUTED.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF

GEN. WILLIAM O. BUTLER,

OF KENTUCKY.

BY FRANKS B. BEAR.

In memoirs of individuals of distinction, it

is usual to look first to their ancestry. The

fact is universal which prompts us to learn some-

thing of even an ordinary acquaintance in whom

interest is felt. It will, therefore, only be

a natural and proper curiosity to introduce the

subject of this notice by a short account of a

family whose striking traits survive in him so

remarkably.

General Butler's grandfather, Thomas Butler,

was born in 1742, in Kentucky, Ireland.

He married in 1742. Three of

his five sons who attained manhood, Richard,

William, and Thomas, were born in Ireland.

The father of General William O. Butler, and

Edward, the youngest son, were born in Penn-

sylvania. It is remarkable that all these men,

and all their immediate descendants, with a

single exception, were engaged in the military

service of this country.

The oldest Richard was lieutenant colonel of

Morgan's celebrated highlanders, and to him it

is due much of the high character that was in

the revolution. The next distinguished value

which gave nobility and dignity to the name

of the revolution, was that of General Butler.

From this office, which was held by the father

of General Butler, it is probable that the

idea of a military career was first suggested

to the young man. He was born in 1791, in

the town of Lexington, in Kentucky.

His father, General Butler, was a man of

high character, and was in many of the

most important offices of the government.

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Butler, who presented him a sword. Near

the close of the war, he went to the south with

the Pennsylvania brigade, where he found him.

He emigrated to Kentucky in 1781. He was

the last of the old stock left when the war of

1812 commenced. He was made adjutant gen-

eral when Kentucky became a State, and in

that capacity joined one of the armies sent out

by Kentucky during the war.

Edward Butler, the youngest of the brothers,

was too young to enter the army in the first

stages of the revolution, but joined it near the

close, and had then a capacity when Gen. St.

Clair took the command, and led it to the

defeat in which so many of the best

soldiers of the country perished. He then

received the highest courage and strongest

fraternal affection, in carrying his wounded

brother out of the massacre, which was confined

to the route of the retreating army, and

from which a few escaped, even of those

who had been ordered to be killed. He

was subsequently made adjutant general in

Wayne's army.

Of these five brothers, four had sons—all

of whom, with one exception, were engaged in

the military or naval service of the country

during the last war.

1st. General Richard Butler's son, William

did a lieutenant in the navy, early in the

last war. His son, Captain James Butler, was

at the head of the Pittsburgh Blues, which com-

manded in the campaign of the northwest,

and was particularly distinguished in the

battle of Mackinac.

2d. Colonel William Butler, also of the

revolutionary army, had two sons; one died in

the navy, the other a chaplain in Wayne's

army. He was in the battle with the Indians

in 1794.

3d. Lieut. Col. Thomas Butler, of the old

stock, had three sons, the eldest a judge.

The second, Col. Robert Butler, was at the

head of the "Pittsburgh Blues," which com-

manded in the campaign of the northwest,

and was particularly distinguished in the

battle of Mackinac.

4th. Percival Butler, captain in the revolu-

tionary army, and adjutant general of Kentucky

during the last war, had four sons; three

of whom were captains, and did not see action

in the revolution. The eldest, Gen. William O.

Butler, the subject of this notice, took part

in the battle of the Clouds, and in the

campaign of the northwest, and was particu-

larly distinguished in the battle of Mackinac.

5th. General Butler, the subject of this

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the patriots of the battle. The incident,

which signified the character of the subject

of this memoir, is a proper topic.

There were two battles, at the river Raisin,

one in the 18th, the other on the 22d of Janu-

ary. In the first, the whole body of Indian

warriors drawn together from all the lake

tribes, for the defence of Upper Canada against

the approaching Kentuckians, were encountered.

It was by the attack of this formidable force

of the Indians, and by the most expert

warriors on the continent, a strong party of

warriors from the line with which Gen.

Butler advanced, running forward to reach

a fence, as a cover from which to ply their

rifles. Butler instantly proposed, and was

permitted, to anticipate them. Calling upon some

of the most alert and active men of the com-

pany, he ran directly to meet the Indians at

the fence. He and his comrades, anticipated

the enemy, and, getting possession of the fence,

kept the advantage of the position for their

advancing friends. This incident, however, is

of little importance as to results, is well re-

membered in giving the traits of a young soldier's

character. It is said that the highest veteran

of the opening of the first battle, for the

moment, somewhat appalled, and Gen. Wolfe

of the bravest of men, declared that the

"horrid yell of the Indians strikes the boldest

heart with affright." The striding soldier, who

for the first time, beheld a field of battle

on the shores of the river Raisin, presenting

himself in the form of a terrible enemy,

where masses had filled his native State with

tales of horror, must have felt some stirring

emotions. But the crack of the Indian rifle, and

his savage yell, awoke in him the instinct

of his nature, and the promptitude with

which he conceived his duty, led him to a

charge, and, rushing forward to meet

the enemy, he was the first to strike

himself in the breast, and to receive a

glancing wound, which he did not feel

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THE FIELD OF RAISIN.

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